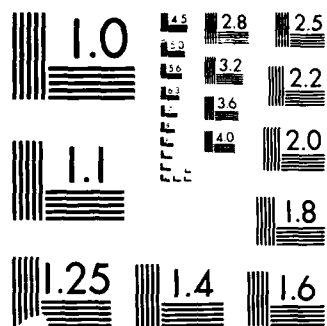


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RISK -- The Operational Edge in the Peninsula
Campaign of 1862.

by

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Field Artillery

School of Advanced Military Studies
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

26 April 1988

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<p>This study analyzes the impact of risk taking and risk avoidance by the opposing operational commanders in the Peninsula Campaign of the American Civil War. General McClellan's superior force lost this campaign primarily as a result of his risk-avoidance, while General Lee accepted risk and won. The purpose of this study is to determine what factors influenced risk taking by these two generals, and how that knowledge can aid contemporary operational commanders and their leaders.</p> <p>The analysis begins with a review of the meaning and relevance of operational risk, followed by a summary of the Peninsula Campaign. The inquiry into risk taking begins with an examination of the leaders themselves and their personal qualities which affected their ability to accept risk. The investigation continues by probing the impact of political involvement and battlefield conditions on McClellan and Lee's (cont. on other side of form)</p>					
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19. (cont) risk taking.

The study concludes that McClellan lost the campaign because he failed to accept risk while his adversary exploited such opportunities. McClellan's inadequate moral courage, his perception of political meddling, and inadequate intelligence system, combined to limit his ability to accept risk. Accordingly, the paper closes with some considerations in an effort to preclude our present operational commanders from suffering the same risk taking inhibitions as General McClellan.

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Campaign of 1862.

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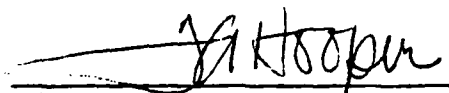
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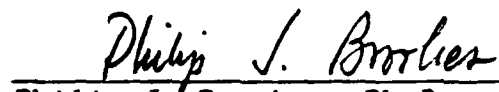
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ABSTRACT

RISK -- The Operational Edge in the Peninsula Campaign of 1862 by Major Patrick C. Sweeney, USA, 48 pages.

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The study concludes that McClellan lost the campaign because he failed to accept risk while his adversary exploited such opportunities. McClellan's inadequate moral courage, his perception of political meddling, and inadequate intelligence system, combined to limit his ability to accept risk. Accordingly, the paper closes with some considerations in an effort to preclude our present operational commanders from suffering the same risk taking inhibitions as General McClellan.

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SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

The United States has dispatched a joint contingency force to a hostile shore. The deployed Army elements represent the only combat formations available to the country without further time consuming and unpopular mobilization. This force may not be capable of winning the war by its actions -- yet its own destruction would certainly lose the war for the United States.

The operation is beset by Presidential interference, media distortions, lack of cooperation between the Navy and Army, a difficult logistic challenge over sea lines of communications (LOCs), and a dismal operational intelligence failure.

The American commander is held in high regard for his previous accomplishments, however he has never experienced the command of such a large force. His Army is just as green, and he is acutely aware of the dangers facing such an inexperienced force.

This situation could serve as an outline for the execution of any number of current operation plans (OPLANs) by the United States Army. However, this is the outline of a campaign that the United States Army participated in during the American Civil War -- the Peninsula Campaign of 1862. In view of the striking similarities of that campaign to present OPLANs, today's operational planner should find some value in studying this old and sometimes controversial campaign. A factor

that makes it even more relevant is that the United States' force was superior to its enemy in both men and material, yet it lost! What caused the defeat? In one word, risk. The Union commander, General McClellan, never took a risk during the campaign, while his opponent General Lee did so in a decisive manner.

The purpose of this study is to examine why one operational commander assumed risk while the other did not. The monograph will focus on the factors, characteristics, and conditions that influence risk taking by operational commanders. Specifically the investigation will center on three categories that influenced both McClellan's and Lee's abilities to accept risk: personal traits, political influence, and battlefield conditions. This probe of risk taking during the Peninsula Campaign will conclude with an analysis of the presented evidence for relevance to current operational commanders and their planners.

Preceding an examination of risk taking we should reach a common understanding of exactly what risk is and how it will be used in this study. In his book On War, Carl von Clausewitz provides a framework which allows the reader to evaluate the operational commander's appreciation of risk.

Clausewitz views all conflicts as a matter of ends versus means. In other words, an army has an objective -- an end -- and it has its war making resources (soldiers,

supplies, morale, etc.) to achieve this end. These resources are the operational commander's means to achieve the end. The crux of the problem facing most commanders is that they seldom believe they have the resources needed to achieve the desired end state. If the end state remains unchanged and the commander still strives to succeed with his inadequate means, then he is assuming operational risk. Thus, operational risk can be viewed as the element which attempts to align inadequate means with a desired end state.

Clausewitz provides another differentiation on risk taking which this study incorporates. He states,

A distinction should be made among acts of boldness that result from sheer necessity. Necessity comes in varying degrees. If it is pressing, a man in pursuit of his aim may be driven to incur one set of risks in order to avoid others just as serious. In that event one can admire only his powers of resolution...The young man who leaps across a deep chasm to show off his horsemanship displays boldness; if he takes the same leap to escape a band of savage janissaries all he shows is resolution.¹

Consequently, this study will view operational risk in the context of the commander having other -- albeit possibly less effective -- options available from which to select. A dangerous gambit, based on the commander's belief that his current position is hopeless, shall not be considered as risk taking.

This understanding of operational risk-taking forms the basis for the following analysis of the Peninsula

campaign. The analysis will begin with a summary of the campaign, and then follow with a study of specific factors effecting operational risk taking.

SECTION II. CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

The North's strategic situation before the Peninsula campaign was desperate. The Federal Army of the Potomac was defeated in its first encounter with the rebels. The Battle of Bull Run in July 1861 shook the North's confidence in both its army and their generals. No longer was the North in the position of simply defeating a ragtag rebel mob. Now their own capital was in danger of falling to the rebels. This precarious military situation in Washington allowed attention to be diverted to what would otherwise be considered a minor victory in a secondary theater of operations. In these desperate times, the North turned to General George B. McClellan, the victor of western Virginia.

Shortly after the Bull Run defeat, President Lincoln directed General McClellan to report to Washington and assume command of the Army of the Potomac. A brief time later General McClellan expanded his new position into the command of all Federal forces. So at the age of thirty-five, the "Young Napoleon," as he was known, began the tasks of assuring the safety of the nation's capital and rebuilding the Federal Army for an eventual attack upon the South. Tasks that even his most rabid detractors

concede he accomplished in an admirable manner.²

As McClellan continued the rebuilding of the Union Army, he also began his planning for the regaining of the initiative in the Virginia theater. His planning coincided with a rising public clamor for action against the rebels. This intense clamor soon translated into political pressure for action. However, McClellan, determined to stay his course, concentrated on rebuilding his army before committing it to action. His intent was so focused that he intentionally failed to take the President into his confidence. This failure precluded the President from becoming a buffer against the politicians' and public's cries for action. In fact, the President, ignorant of McClellan's plans, found himself joining in the outcry.³ This situation was made more difficult when Lincoln, without consulting McClellan, designated the commanders of the Army of the Potomac's corps and on 27 January 1862 published General War Order No. 1. The order directed the "forward movement of all the armies of the Union on George Washington's birthday, February 22."⁴ A date that was selected for sentimental purposes rather than any military considerations.⁵

Though the order was never executed, it served notice to McClellan that he could delay no longer. McClellan outlined his campaign plan to the President. The essence of the plan was to avoid the strong Southern forces that had established themselves in breastworks near the Bull

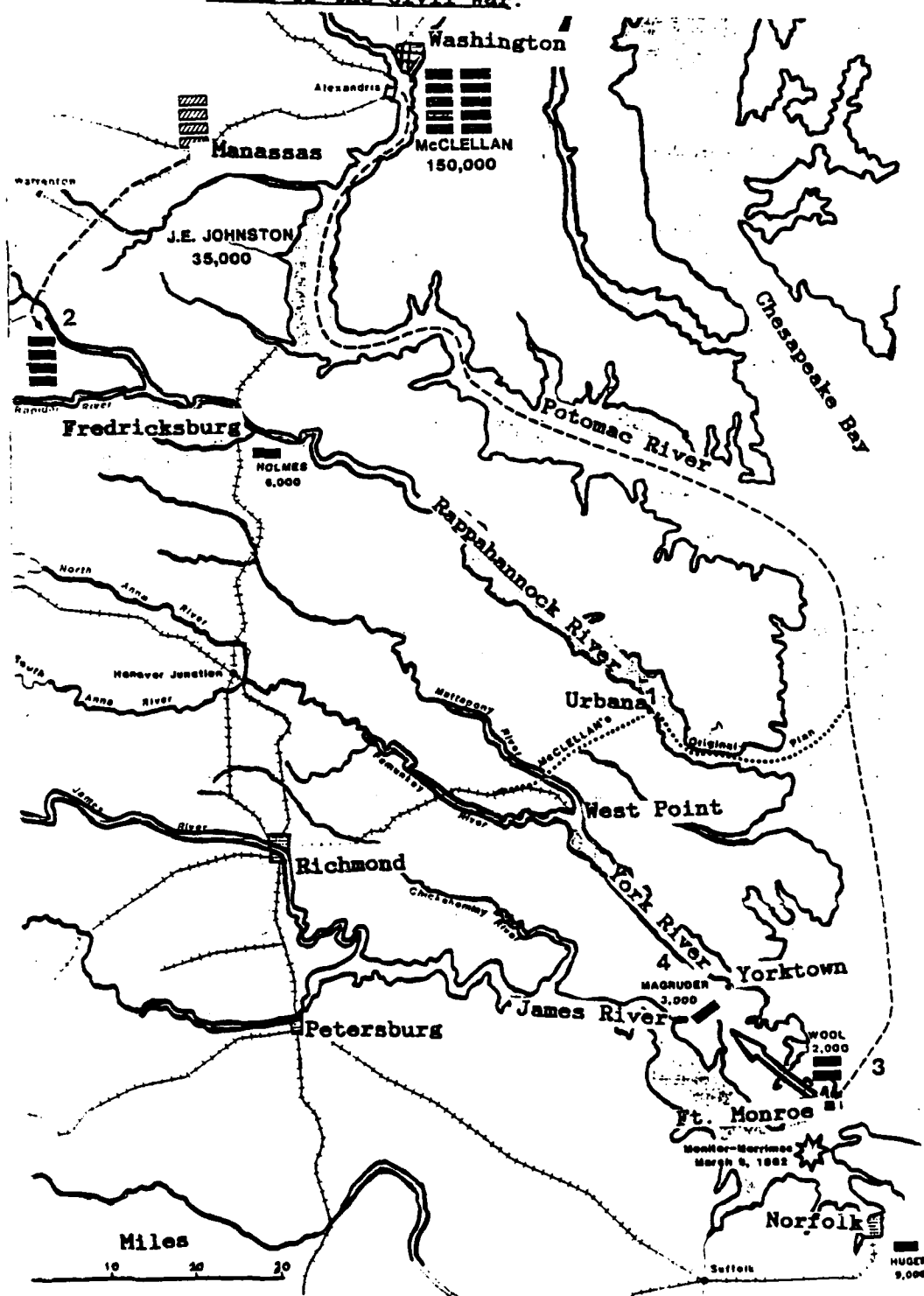
Run battlefield. McClellan's army would avoid the enemy's strength and approach the Southern capital of Richmond from the Chesapeake Bay town of Urbana. The Federal Army would put itself between the rebel army and Richmond, thus requiring the enemy to fall back on Richmond's defenses (see Figure 1). This bold, indirect maneuver would require an amphibious operation of immense proportions, yet McClellan was convinced of its success. Lincoln, on the other hand, had deep reservations. McClellan's plan would expose Washington to a Southern attack. Lincoln preferred a more direct attack south, through the rebel positions and on to Richmond. After much debate Lincoln acceded to McClellan's wishes.⁶ One caveat that Lincoln made to the plan was for McClellan to ensure that sufficient forces were left behind to defend Washington.⁷ Additionally, to preclude further delays, Lincoln directed that the operation would commence on 18 March.⁸

The direction to avoid further delays was to no avail. General McClellan's failure to initiate his campaign in a timely manner allowed General Johnston, the commander of the Southern forces in Manassas (Bull Run), to withdraw his forces south to positions on the Rappahannock River. This new development negated the effectiveness of the Urbana plan. McClellan was now unable to safely impose himself behind Johnston's army.

Intent on using an amphibious approach, McClellan

FIGURE 1 -- THE PLAN.

Note: All maps are from Symonds, A Battlefield Atlas of the Civil War.



adjusted his campaign plan to replace Urbana with Union controlled Fort Monroe as the new landing site. Lincoln had even greater reservations about this latest modification, yet once again he agreed to the plan with the proviso that Washington remain protected.⁹

The new campaign plan called for Fort Monroe to be the Union support base, with a line of operations to extend from Yorktown, to West Point, then to Richmond. McClellan expected to engage in a decisive battle between West Point and Richmond. Success depended upon a rapid concentration of forces and then quick movement to West Point.¹⁰ Though not under his command, naval support figured heavily into McClellan's plan. Not only did the Navy provide him his lines of communication back to Washington, they were expected to reduce the Yorktown defenses in short order.

McClellan's concentration of forces at Fort Monroe began in late March, 1862. Only a few days passed before McClellan encountered his first setbacks -- none of which were imposed by the enemy. Upon reaching Fort Monroe the Union commander discovered that his control over his naval support was in serious question. The Navy knew nothing of the mission to reduce the Yorktown defenses, and now stated that it could not be done!¹¹ If this was not enough, five days later, as McClellan's ground forces were beginning their movement towards Yorktown, Lincoln prevented the departure of McDowell's Corps from

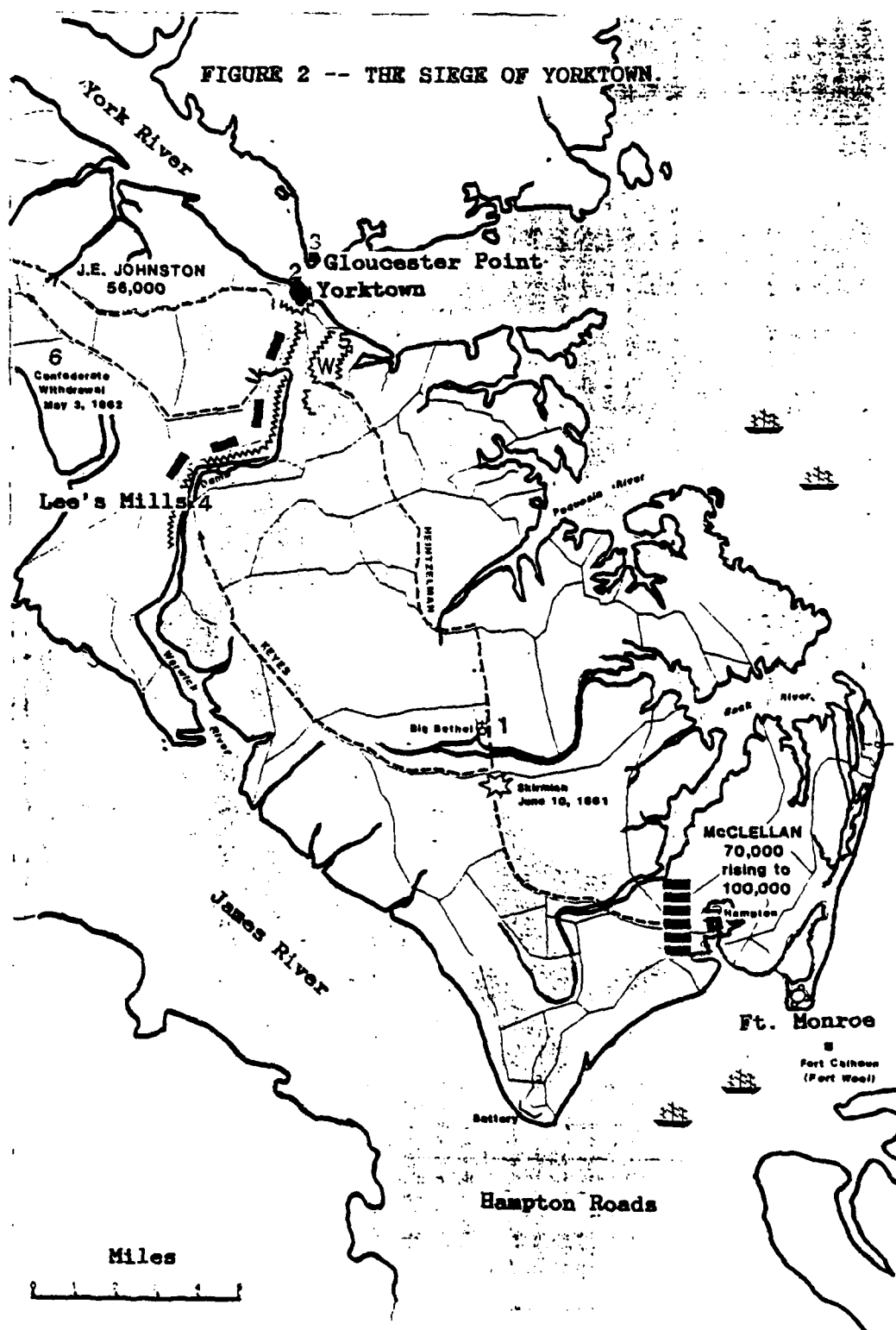
Washington. His reason? Lincoln felt that McClellan had left insufficient forces to secure Washington.¹²

With two of his major campaign assumptions negated -- an ability to reduce Yorktown quickly and enough forces to accomplish the objective -- McClellan faced a new operation. Nevertheless, he only made minor changes to his campaign plan and began siege operations to reduce Yorktown (see Figure 2).¹³

The Yorktown siege surfaced a recurring problem for McClellan. He tended to overestimate his enemy's strength grossly. He projected the rebel force at Manassas to be twice the size they actually were. At Yorktown he estimated the enemy to number 120,000 to his 109,000 men. In fact, the rebel force never exceeded 53,000.¹⁴ This intelligence failure fueled McClellan's insistence throughout the campaign that he was facing a superior enemy and he needed more reinforcements to achieve victory. Certainly the loss of McDowell's Corps could only have served to further this feeling of inadequacy.

McClellan's preparations for the siege of Yorktown lasted nearly a month (5 April - 4 May 1862). His delay allowed the Confederacy to assemble the manpower necessary to meet the Union invaders. Once the siege guns were in position to deliver their assured conclusion of the Yorktown issue, Johnston withdrew the rebels.¹⁵

An uncoordinated and leaderless Union pursuit force



followed the withdrawing Confederates; McClellan remained behind. Johnston's soldiers made a brief stand at Williamsburg, then fell back. However, McClellan's absence from the battlefield precluded continued pressure on the retreating army. He had missed a chance for a decisive victory.¹⁶

On 6 May 1862 an exacerbad Lincoln and his Secretary of War arrived at Fort Monroe to survey the situation. McClellan declined to confer with his President since he said his duties called for him to be at Williamsburg. Left to his own devices, Lincoln conducted his own tour of the Army, interviewing leaders and assessing conditions. To his amazement, Lincoln found no action planned to capture Norfolk now that the fall of Williamsburg sealed the port's fate. Acting unilaterally, Lincoln directed the Navy to initiate an operation -- which proved successful -- to seize Norfolk.¹⁷

The fall of Norfolk accomplished another significant event; the neutralization of the rebel ironclad Virginia (known in the North as the Merrimac). Its mission was to guard the James River approach to Richmond. But without the Norfolk base, the powerful ship was lacking a base of operations and had to be scuttled.¹⁸

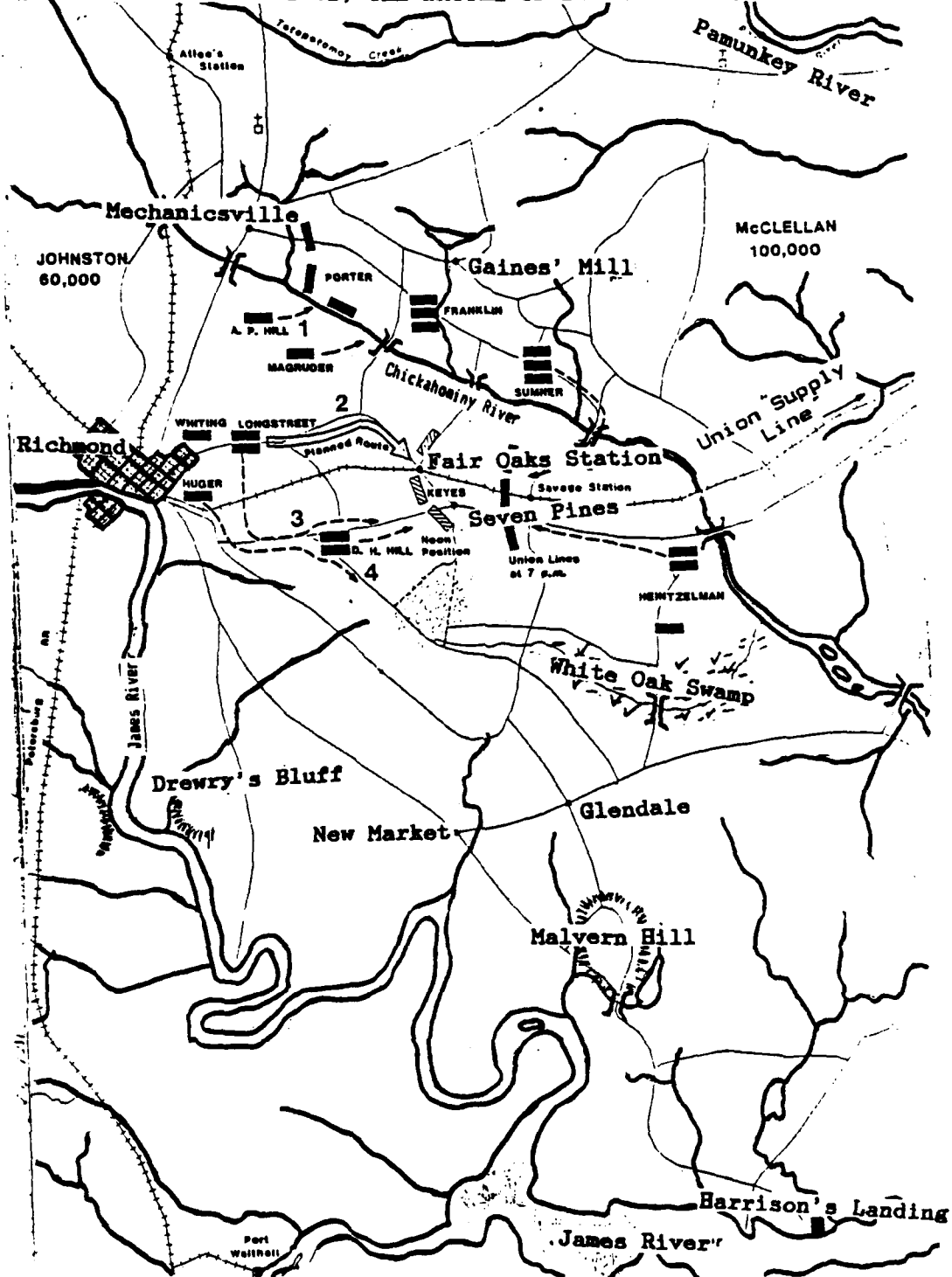
The Navy seized upon this new development by devising an operation that would bypass the time consuming land approach to Richmond, already mired in mud and far behind schedule. Their plan was for a joint effort up the

James River, (see Figure 3) overcoming a single river defensive position, and then straight to Richmond. The Confederate President, Jefferson Davis, realized the threat posed by the loss of the Virginia. He ordered evacuations of Richmond since he believed its fall could now only be days away. However, General McClellan was not prepared to support the Navy plan. He "preferred to defer his answer until he got his army on the other side of the Chickahominy."¹⁹

As a result of McClellan's reluctance to join the operation, the Navy attempted to accomplish the mission on their own. On the 15th of May the Union Navy navigated up the James River and engaged rebel positions at Drewry's Bluff, a point within seven miles of Richmond. Without ground support the operation was doomed to failure. The rebel position was too high for the navy's guns to elevate for effective fire. The Navy noted there were adequate landing sites on both banks of the river which would support a ground assault on this single obstruction to victory.²⁰ Their pleas for Army cooperation fell on deaf ears; McClellan was never to support this bold an operation.

On 18 May Lincoln finally succumbed to McClellan's constant plea for troops. He advised the general that he would dispatch General McDowell's Corps along the land route to Richmond. This offer had some significant strings attached to it. First, McClellan would not be in

FIGURE 3 -- 31 MAY 1862, THE BATTLE OF SEVEN PINES (FAIR OAKS).



command of the Corps. Second, it must keep itself interposed between Washington and Richmond. Third, McClellan was required to support the force by the Pamunkey River.²¹ McClellan was outraged. Years later McClellan assessed this action by writing,

This order rendered it impossible for me to use the James River as a line of operations, forced me to establish our depots on the Pamunkey, and to approach Richmond from the north. Herein lay the failure of the campaign.²²

As it turned out, McDowell's Corps never participated in the campaign. Shortly after beginning its march to join the operation in the Peninsula, Lincoln countermanded his order. General Jackson's Valley Campaign was beginning to threaten Washington, and Lincoln found this as too great a risk. McDowell's force detached some elements towards the Shenandoah Valley while the remainder stayed in the vicinity of Fredericksburg.²³

Slowly but surely McClellan's army continued its journey up the Peninsula. His supply base moved from West Point to White House Landing. For efficiency and security of the new supply base, McClellan positioned three corps to the north of the river, and two corps to the south on the eastern approach to Richmond.²⁴

Nature punished the Army for splitting the corps. The unseasonable heavy rains, coupled with an already swampy region, provided a difficult obstruction between the divided forces.

General Johnston, also receiving pressure from his

President to act, saw the potential of defeating a portion of McClellan's army and initiated an attack. The assault (Battle of Seven Pines, Figure 3) was uncoordinated and soundly thrown back, McClellan, however, did not follow up the success. Instead he directed the building of earthworks in the event of another attack or as "a safe retreat in the event of disaster."²⁵

Though the Federal Army won the battle, in the long run the action of Seven Pines may have sealed their fate. The conservative General Johnston was wounded during the battle and replaced by General Robert E. Lee, the military advisor for Jefferson Davis. And though to date his Civil War record was less than remarkable, he had the trust and confidence of his President -- something that Johnston had lacked.

Lee recognized that he must take some action that would offset McClellan's superiority in equipment and men. His revised strategy:

He chose to move from a defensive strategy to an offensive - defensive, attack at a chosen point to cause the war to focus there ... prevent the enemy from attacking everywhere.²⁶

One of Lee's first actions was to dispatch forces from Richmond to support Jackson in his valley campaign. This apparent weakening of force in the critical Richmond theater was intended to assist Jackson in finishing up his campaign so he could then provide the

full weight of his support to Lee in time for the decisive battle. In conjunction with the troop movements, Lee also began digging fortifications outside Richmond -- earning him the unflattering nickname of "King of Spades." Undaunted by the criticism Lee continued digging. He realized any future bold movement on his part required the actual defense of Richmond to be an economy of force mission. That economy of force operation must rest upon a credible defense.

Meanwhile, the first week of June found McClellan continuing to establish reliable roads across the swollen Chickahominy river and its flooded marshes. His actions were further slowed by his insistence that the roads be capable of handling heavy siege guns. As his force slowly made its way through the marshes on the south side of the river, he was weakening his security on his vulnerable supply line to White House.

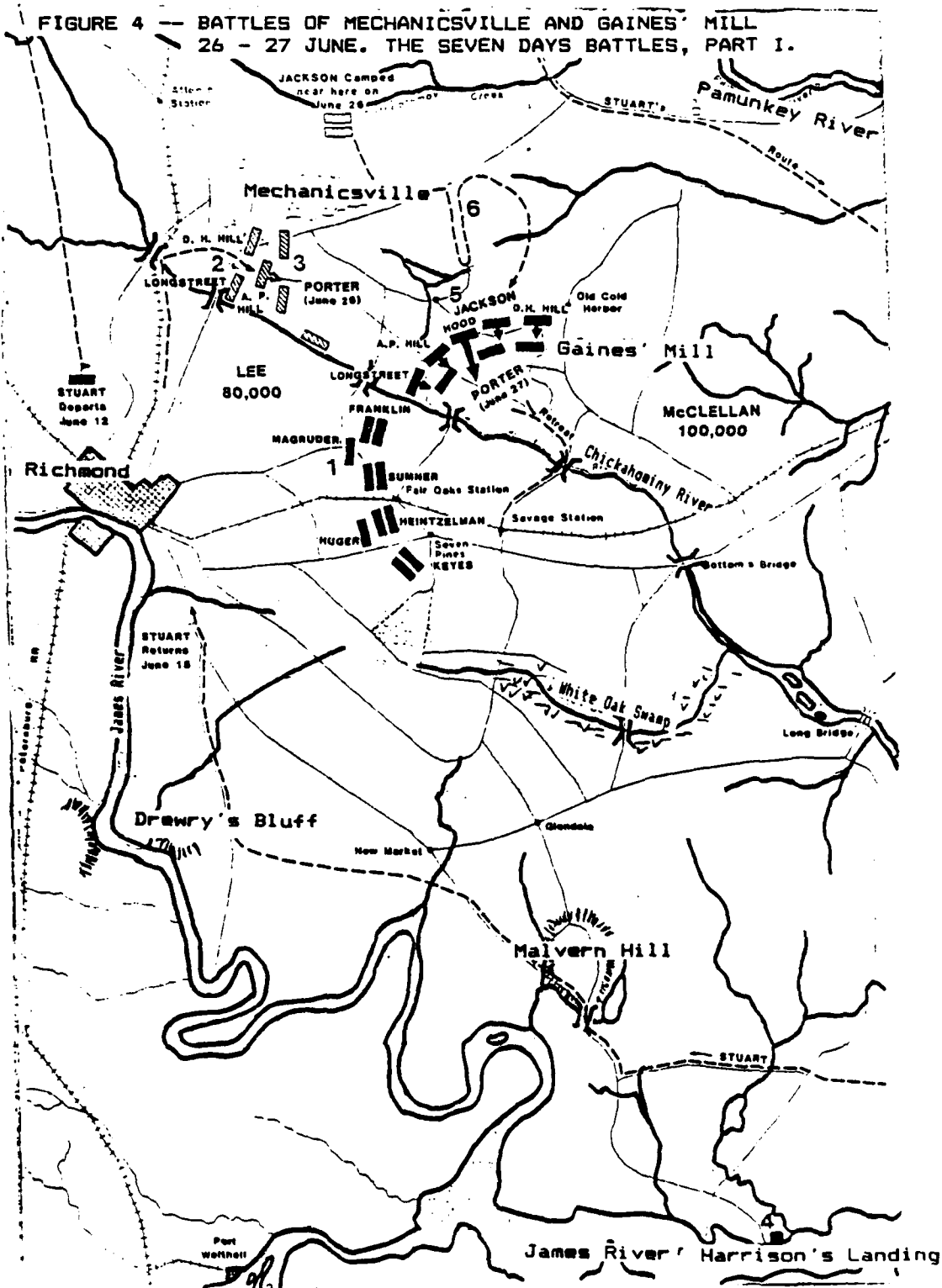
Lee recognized that the Union line of communication (LOC) might be vulnerable to attack. On 12 June he dispatched General J.E.B. Stuart with 1,200 men to verify the strength of Federal forces securing the LOC.²⁷ Stuart's cavalry made a bold raid around the entire Union Army. His action not only provided Lee the information he required, but also proved how vulnerable McClellan's flanks were. McClellan's reaction was to begin shifting his supply base cross country from White House to the James River. Confusingly, he took no actions to

strengthen his forces north of the river. In fact, he continued to weaken this area by withdrawing even more forces to the south side of the river.²⁸

Similar to the Seven Pines battle, Lee now hoped to strike the isolated corps that McClellan left on the north bank of the river. Lee's plan called for a coordinated attack of all his forces to include Jackson who was returning quickly from the valley. Lee left only a small force behind to secure the Richmond defense. Thus on 26 June 1862, the battle of Mechanicsville began; later identified as the first significant engagement of The Seven Days Battles (see Figure 4).²⁹

Lee's attack, suffering from the frictions of war, succumbed to the same fate as that of Johnston's at Seven Pines. Jackson's army, renowned for its great mobility, failed to appear. The result was an uncoordinated attack. McClellan was able to send support to the isolated corps and repulse the effort. However, McClellan's poor intelligence network was working overtime. He was told that Lee's army numbered "at least 180,000"³⁰ while in fact it only approached 80,000 (even with Jackson). Yet this made sense to McClellan, Lee would never attack in such a bold manner unless he was greater in strength.³¹

FIGURE 4 -- BATTLES OF MECHANICSVILLE AND GAINES' MILL
26 - 27 JUNE. THE SEVEN DAYS BATTLES, PART I.



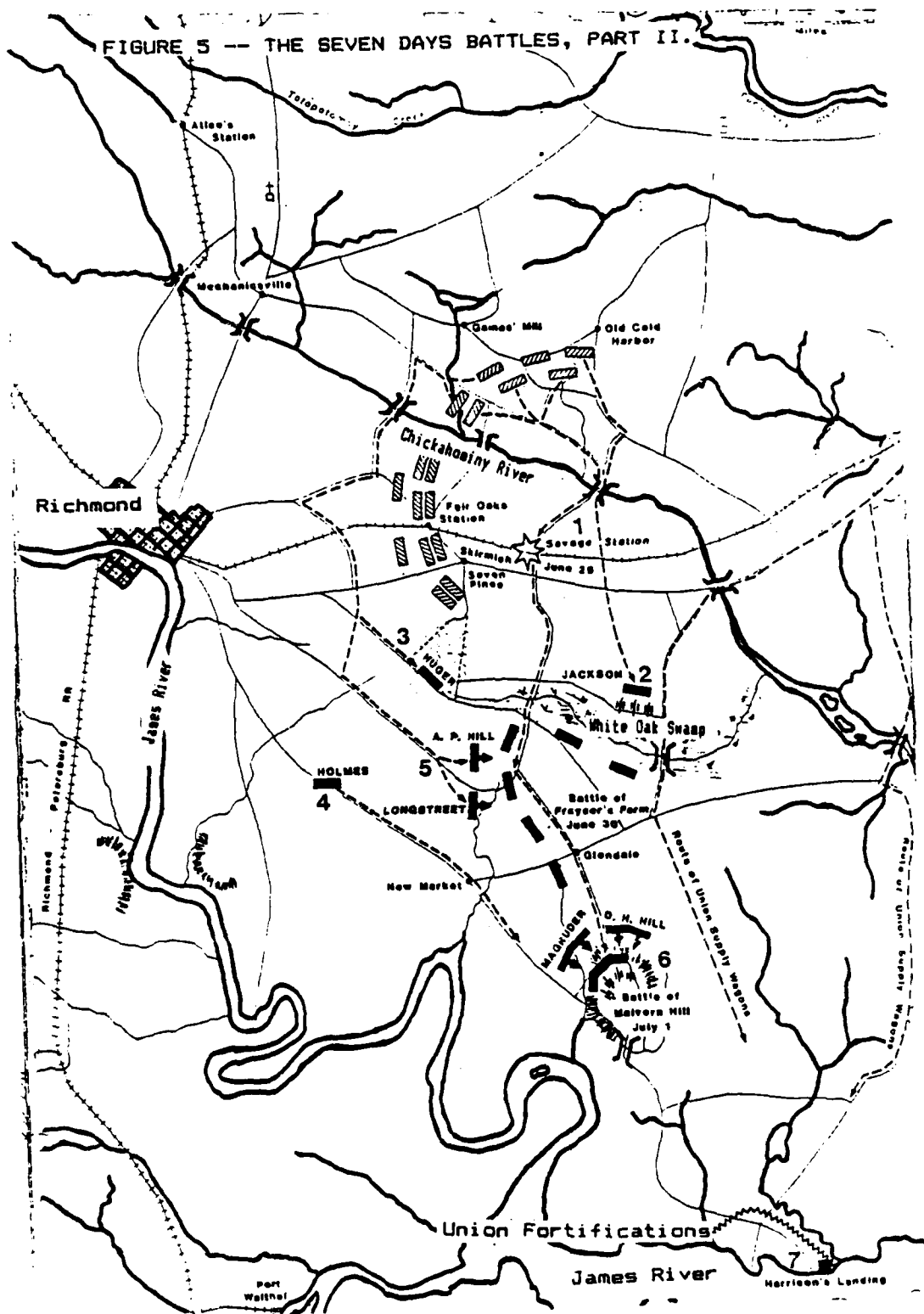
So disillusioned was McClellan that he sent a message to Washington stating:

I am in no way responsible...I have not failed to represent repeatedly the necessity for reinforcements...if the result of the action... is a disaster, the responsibility cannot be thrown on my shoulders; it must rest where it belongs.³²

Infected with the diseases of faulty intelligence and deteriorating will, McClellan began a withdrawal of his army and its supply base to the James River. His route took him through flooded swamplands and over totally inadequate roads. Lee refused to let his failure at Mechanicsville dampen his grasp upon the initiative. He risked all by sending his army in pursuit of the Federals.

The next southern attack landed on the Union Army on 27 June at Gaines' Mill (see Figure 5). Once again the attack against the isolated Federal force was uncoordinated. Nevertheless, the Southern forces did have a numerical superiority and finally broke through. Only the evening's darkness saved the withdrawing Northerners. This battle's casualties were staggering: 6,837 Union and 8,750 Confederates.³³ This same evening McClellan sent the following telegram to the President:

If we have lost the day we have yet preserved our honor, and no one need blush for the Army of the Potomac. I have lost this battle because my force was too small. I again repeat that I am not responsible for this, and I say it with the earnestness of a general who feels in his heart the loss of every brave man who has been needlessly sacrificed today. I still hope to retrieve our



fortunes, but to do this the government must view the matter in the same earnest light I do... As it is we have lost nothing but men, and those the best we have...I know that a few thousand men would have changed this battle from a defeat into a victory. As it is, the government can not and must not hold me responsible...If I save the army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other persons in Washington. You have done your best to sacrifice this army.³⁴

McClellan's corps fought skillful rear-guard actions against the attacking rebels (see Figure 5). On 30 June Lee's soldiers launched yet another uncoordinated attack of minimal consequence. The following day the Union Army was firmly positioned on Malvern Hill.

Lee assessed the Federal position as well defended, but he saw few options available. He could not allow McClellan to escape. He planned for his artillery to blast a hole in the Union position, then exploit the gap with his infantry. As with Lee's other operations in the Seven Days Battles, this attack also was uncoordinated. The infantry attacked before the artillery had done its work and the Southerners charged into a wall of fire. The attack was repulsed with heavy casualties.³⁵

Later that evening McClellan withdrew to Harrison Landing on the James River. The Seven Days Battles were over as was the Peninsula campaign. The South had lost nearly a quarter of its army (20,000 casualties) while the Federal force suffered 16,000 casualties from an army of 115,000. Soon "Lincoln would offer McClellan 50,000 more men, but when he replied that would not be enough,

Lincoln ordered the army recalled."³⁸

Summary

General McClellan devised a bold campaign to bring the Union a swift and decisive victory over the rebel army in Virginia. In retrospect, the plan itself was the last bold act of the Federal commander. McClellan chose not to assail hasty breastworks at Yorktown -- though in waiting a month they became ever stronger and his own critical time table ever more useless. He chose not to take advantage of the promising possibilities of the Navy's operation in the James River. He never questioned Lee's seeming ability to be strong everywhere. He seldom believed that his men could accomplish the same feats of movement and massing as his enemy. A characterization of General McClellan's Peninsula campaign would be that of a failure to accept risk at the operational level. A failure made even more apparent by the ability of his opposing commander to take risks. Lee took risk in sending forces to Jackson in the valley while McClellan was outside the gates of Richmond. He assumed risk by leaving Richmond lightly defended and attacking at Mechanicsville to seize the initiative. And then Lee risked all by throwing his full army into a pursuit of McClellan's withdrawing army.

Both Lee and McClellan were American leaders from similar origins. Both were distinguished cadets at West Point. Both served with honor and distinction in the

Mexican War. Both had high reputations within the United States Army before the rebellion. And both had experienced command in combat in smaller actions during the earlier stages of the Civil War. Why was Lee more capable of taking operational risk than McClellan? Was it just a difference in their personalities? Was political intrigue involved as a risk inhibitor? Or, was it a combination of battlefield conditions that influenced risk taking and risk avoidance?

In the following sections we will examine each of these areas and evaluate their influence on both commanders. That examination will allow us to identify risk-enhancing and risk-inhibiting factors that are of use to today's operational commander.

SECTION III. THE LEADERS

The greatest single factor that affects an operational commander's ability to accept risk is the commander himself.³⁷ All other influences are ultimately assessed by the commander and he determines whether the risk is acceptable. Since the commander himself is so important to this equation, then a study of key personal traits is in order. Certainly the most critical of the traits that influence risk taking is moral courage.

Moral Courage

The great military philosophers tell us of the importance of moral courage. Clausewitz describes it as

one of the characteristics of military genius.³⁸ Jomini wrote, "of the most essential qualities for a general, the first is a high moral courage, capable of great resolutions."³⁹ Obviously moral courage emerges as an important trait for the great commanders; but, what is moral courage?

Clausewitz differentiates moral courage from simple courage. Simple courage is brave action "in the face of personal danger," and though also a worthy trait of a great commander, quite different from moral courage.⁴⁰ He regards moral courage as a "courage to accept responsibility, courage in the face of moral danger."⁴¹ One of the distinctions between moral and simple courage is clearly applicable to this campaign. This distinction is the commander's moral courage to risk expending soldiers' lives in the short term in order to save a greater number in the long term. This type of courage is much different then that required when a commander exposes himself to personal danger. Just as a risk is different from a gamble, so the judicious use of an army in an attack is different from wasting soldier's lives. However, if the risk or attack fails, the commander still shoulders the burden of a bad risk -- the essence of the moral dilemma.

Napoleon, probably the greatest of commanders, also viewed moral courage as an essential of great generalship. He described it as:

Courage of 2 A.M. ... extemporaneous courage which even in the most sudden of emergencies, leaves one's freedom of mind, judgment, and decision completely unaffected.⁴²

All of these great military thinkers draw a direct link between the possession of moral courage and the ability to take risks. Clausewitz describes it as determination while Jomini views it as boldness. Napoleon characterizes it alternately as both boldness and risk taking. In fact he assesses past great captains to this measurement.

"Whether criticized or admired, boldness is the common quality singled out by Napoleon in the seven great generals whom he cites as examples."⁴³ To mention but a couple; On Caesar -- "He took great risks in the adventures into which he was pushed by his boldness; his genius got him out of his difficulties...he was a man whose genius and boldness were equally great."⁴⁴ On Frederick -- "What distinguishes Frederick most is not the cleverness of his moves but his boldness."⁴⁵

Clearly, the eminent military thinkers of the past see strong moral courage as a prerequisite for a great commander. And a great commander is one that is capable of accepting risk. Though moral courage is probably the more important of the personal traits influencing risk taking, there are others to consider.

Technical Competence

The military masters of antiquity agree on the

importance of technical competence in a great commander. Though not held in the level of importance as moral courage, Clausewitz sees "practical intelligence" as a critical element developing as a leader passes up the chain of responsibility.⁴⁶ Jomini also considers technical competence as secondary to moral courage; but nevertheless, he sees it as an important attribute for a commander.⁴⁷ If it is not as important as moral courage, then what influence does technical competence have on a commander's ability to assume risk?

At the operational level, technical competence goes beyond simply knowing the capabilities and limitations of one's weapons. The operational commander must have the technical competence to understand the capabilities and limitations of both his and his enemy's armies. The essence of this trait is best summed up by Sun Tzu when he wrote:

Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril.⁴⁸

The essence of Sun Tzu's advice is that a commander is unable to arrive at the correct decision if he does not know the options which he has available. An operational commander without an understanding of both his and his enemy's capabilities is unable to make a knowledgeable decision or properly assess a risk. A commander who has this shortcoming and realizes it, is less inclined to take a risk. The commander who has this shortcoming and

does not realize it, does not take a risk; he gambles.

The last trait of an operational commander that is worthy of our scrutiny is his age. Is there a relationship between a commander's age and his inclination to accept risk?

Age of the Commander

Most military philosophers believe that the younger generals are the more successful generals. J.F.C. Fuller, in his book Generalship -- Its Diseases and Their Cure, studied the relationship of age to the quality of generalship. He concluded "history has shown that the most effective generals are in the age between 30 - 49."⁴⁹ Napoleon pegs the age of 45 as the discriminator⁵⁰, while Clausewitz simply recognizes the debilitating effects of age on genius.⁵¹

Suffice it to say, youth in our generals is an important quality; but what is its affect on risk taking? Psychologist Norman Dixon in his less than flattering book, On the Psychology of Military Incompetence, provides the link between age and risk taking.

Over the years military incompetence has resulted more from a dearth of boldness than from a lack of caution, and more from a pall of indecision than from an excess of impulsivity....One obvious explanation for the failure of the motivational aspects of leadership...is the relatively advanced age of the individuals concerned. Old men are more cautious than young men, and less able to make quick decisions than those whose arteries have not begun to harden.⁵²

Analysis of McClellan and Lee

The commander's qualities of moral courage, technical competence, and age all affect his ability to assume risk. Military theoreticians regard moral courage as the most significant of all the risk taking qualities needed by an operational commander. In the Peninsula campaign there is a stark disparity between the degree of moral courage displayed by the opposing commanders.

McClellan spent a large portion of the campaign composing messages that would place a more favorable light upon his activities. When questioned by his superiors on almost any decision he became defensive and blamed others. Norman Dixon could have had McClellan in mind when he wrote,

Individuals who become anxious under conditions of stress, or who are prone to be defensive and deny anything that threatens their self-esteem, tend to be bad at judging whether the risks they take...are justified by the possible outcomes of their decisions.⁵³

McClellan's lack of moral courage is also substantiated in his reluctance to commit his soldiers into battle. The new breastworks at Yorktown which held his army at bay for a month should have easily been overcome by a determined Union assault. The pursuit of the repulsed rebel army after the Battle of Seven Pines might have brought victory. Yet he avoided such encounters.⁵⁴ The true reason for this reluctance to commit his troops may lie in a combination of weaknesses

-- both in moral courage and technical competence.

McClellan had a close affinity for his soldiers. He created the Army of the Potomac and felt a strong identity with them. He was also very popular with his men, even after the failed campaign. In fact, one author states that McClellan may very well have been the most popular commander in American history.⁵⁵ This same commander never had a high regard for the capabilities of his army in relation to Lee's. Historians disagree with McClellan on this point. They believe that the armies were of equal military prowess, with the North being far superior in equipment.⁵⁶ Couple a low regard for the abilities of one's own army with a reluctance to expend soldier's lives, and we have a commander who is not inclined to take risks. Historian Page Smith was even more blunt in stating, "He (McClellan) was, in Freudian terms, a classic anal retentive. He could not let go."⁵⁷

As for General Lee, he fairs much better in an assessment of moral courage. He displayed this trait when he dispatched his own desperately needed forces to Jackson in the valley. He understood that soldiers' lives must be risked in the short term (Seven Days Battles) to the benefit of the long term (avoidance of a prolonged siege of Richmond). Probably the most obvious instance of Lee's moral courage was his acceptance of personal responsibility during the many miscues of the Seven Days Battle. And though Lee far outweighed McClellan in moral

courage, he also had problems in technical competence.

Lee assumed command of his army in the midst of a battle. He had to learn its true capabilities by trial and error. Thus his unwarranted confidence in his army's capabilities -- especially Jackson's forces -- led to many of Lee's battlefield failures in this campaign. However, unlike McClellan, Lee knew that his army must be capable of the operations that he attempted to execute. This high expectation of capabilities later pays off in the second Bull Run and other campaigns.

Age, as a risk taking discriminator, did not prove to be critical in this campaign -- youth did not prevail. McClellan was 35. Lee was 55. Yet McClellan's relative youth apparently gave him no advantage over Lee. However, as indicated by the military philosophers, age is not as critical to risk taking as moral courage, and should never be considered in isolation.

Conclusion

From the perspective of risk taking in the moral domain, Lee dominates McClellan. All other risk taking factors flow into the moral domain and influence the final risk taking decision. In this context, the situation appears to place the Union at an immediate disadvantage. To overcome disparity in the moral domain, the Union either depended on such overwhelming advantages that risk was not a factor, or sought to achieve dominance in the other factors which influence risk

taking. Only then could the Union Army hope to achieve parity and balance the Southern moral dominance. Though, as we will see, the two remaining factors of political involvement and battlefield conditions did not provide the advantage that the North needed.

SECTION IV. POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

In the previous section the examination of risk taking centered on personal factors that the leaders brought with them to the campaign. This section will investigate the relationship of an external influence on a commander's ability to assume risk -- political involvement.

Sun Tzu tells us of the three ways a ruler can bring misfortune upon his army:

1. When ignorant of that the army should not advance, to order an advance or ignorant that it should not retire, to order a retirement. This is described as hobbling the army.
2. When ignorant of military affairs, to participate in their administration. This causes the officers to be perplexed.
3. When ignorant of command problems to share in the exercise of responsibilities. This engenders doubts in the minds of the officers.⁵⁸

Since a violation of any one of these guidelines may bring about a commander's reluctance to assume risk, a close examination of both Union and Confederate political involvement is warranted.

Union Political Involvement

The charges against Lincoln's interference in the Peninsula campaign are many. He selected McClellan's corps commanders without input from McClellan. Though Lincoln often admitted his ignorance of military matters, he stripped McClellan of his position of General-in-Chief and assumed this position himself.⁵⁹ With little faith in McClellan's campaign plan, Lincoln chose to allow its execution and then whittled away at the operation as it developed. He withheld McDowell's Corps at the campaign's critical opening stages. And when finally released, Lincoln placed such abnormal control measures on the Corps that it became almost as much a hindrance as a help. Liddell Hart characterized Lincoln's actions with McDowell's Corps as nullifying McClellan's plan, a result of "President Lincoln's reluctance to accept a calculated risk (security of Washington)."⁶⁰ Another British critic was as unforgiving. Field Marshal Viscount Wolseley, who visited Lee's camp a short time after the campaign, believed the Peninsula campaign's "failure rested more on Washington's interference than on the general's ineptitude."⁶¹

Probably the most damning evidence against Lincoln and the most glaring example of his ability to inhibit risk taking in McClellan, was his 9 April 1862 message -- four days after informing McClellan of the loss of McDowell's Corps.

...You will do me the justice to remember I always insisted that going down the bay in search of a field, instead of fighting at or near Manassas, was only shifting, and not surmounting, a difficulty...The country will not fail to note, is now noting, that the present hesitation to move upon the entrenched enemy is but the story of Manassas repeated.⁶²

Even a cursory study of the Peninsula campaign shows that Lincoln was certainly no disciple of Sun Tzu. He had so little confidence in his general that he believed his only recourse was to manage personally as many of the campaign's details as possible. This problem was not limited to the North. As we will see, the Southern commanders also had their share of political involvement.

Confederate Political Involvement

President Jefferson Davis, both an ex-Secretary of War and an ex-soldier, was a self-proclaimed military expert. He spent a great deal of his time in the field with his army. In fact he was present on the Seven Pines battlefield when General Johnston was wounded and General Lee assumed command.

General Johnston suffered from many of the same political problems McClellan did. Davis never felt that Johnston understood his intent -- Richmond shall neither be subjected to a siege nor shall it fall into Union hands. Johnston thought his position was hopeless and that it was only a matter of time before McClellan prevailed. His was certainly not an attitude that would evoke confidence from his political masters. Accordingly,

Davis became quite involved with Johnston's operations.⁶³

When Lee assumed command of the army, the President's interference subsided. This reduction was a direct result of Lee's exceptional tact, and Davis's confidence in his former military advisor.⁶⁴ A review of Lee's confidential dispatches to President Davis reflects an atmosphere of cooperation not found in McClellan's correspondence with President Lincoln.⁶⁵ This spirit of cooperation still prevailed even when a nervous Davis agreed to Lee's leaving Richmond lightly defended at the beginning of the Seven Days Battles.

Conclusion

McClellan's greatest mistake may have been his "failure to take Lincoln into his confidence"⁶⁶ early in the planning stages. Instead, he:

blindly insisted upon a plan to which the political authorities objected. He depended upon them for material assistance, and he should have realized that their opposition meant that he would not have their full support and cooperation...⁶⁷

This lack of cooperation and trust between a commander in the field and his President could only inflame the natural inhibition to risk taking that we already identified in McClellan.

As for Lee, his risk taking qualities were not encumbered by an overbearing political master. However, Lee fulfilled his obligation; he never failed to win his President to a plan before the battle. This political

groundwork on Lee's part paid dividends throughout this campaign.

Political involvement is but one of the external factors which influence an operational commander's ability to assume risk. In the next section, the investigation will center on an even greater external influence; the impact of battlefield conditions on risk taking.

SECTION V. BATTLEFIELD CONDITIONS

This study of factors which influence risk taking in operational commanders introduces one final area for our scrutiny -- battlefield conditions. A term such as battlefield conditions summons forth a variety of factors that one might feel compelled to examine. This investigation, however, limits the term to a convenient grouping of three of the most significant external factors that influence an operational commander's ability to accept risk. These factors are military intelligence at the operational level, the style of warfare selected by the commander, and the influence of the culminating point. First we will examine the attributes of each factor; then we will review their impact on McClellan and Lee's campaign.

Intelligence

Before a commander can properly assess the risk he faces he must know two essentials about the enemy -- his

location and his strength.⁶⁸ Commensurate with a lack of information on these two elements is an increase in risk for the commander. This risk may not be proportional to the declining availability of information. In fact, combined with other influences, the degree of risk may expand at a faster pace.

Another aspect of intelligence is its accuracy. Estimates of the enemy's location and strength that are based on "indicators" should always be suspect. The commander's intelligence system must seek out accurate information through the use of redundant means and most desirably, through actual observation.⁶⁹ A commander unknowingly making decisions based on severely inaccurate intelligence will equally assess his risks just as inaccurately.

Style Warfare Selected

Edward Luttwak identifies two styles of warfare from which an operational commander may choose; attrition and maneuver.⁷⁰ Though seldom is either style fought in a pure sense, normally one or the other style will be the dominant form of warfare for a given army in a specific phase of an operation. The style selected points directly to the perceived strengths and weaknesses a commander has of himself and his enemy. It also is an indicator of the risks he is inclined to accept or avoid. Luttwak goes on to say:

Attrition is war waged by industrial methods.

The enemy is treated as a mere array of targets, and success is to be attained by the cumulative effect of superior firepower and material strength...The greater the attrition content of the style of war, the more will routinized techniques of...movement, and re-supply suffice, along with...the smaller need for the application of any operational method. Maneuver (war)...instead of seeking to destroy the enemy's physical substance, the goal is to incapacitate by systematic disruption. (Through) avoidance of the enemy's strengths, followed by the application of some selective superiority against presumed enemy weaknesses.⁷¹

Luttwak also says that a commander who chooses maneuver warfare assumes the greater risk.⁷² Selection of this riskier style of war also places some additional requirements upon the commander.

(Maneuver war) requires accuracy in identifying enemy weaknesses, as well as speed and precision in the action to exploit them...(it) will not usually allow the free substitution of quantity for quality.⁷³

Culminating Point

Clausewitz defines the point of culmination as a decision point where a commander "must make up his mind and act, when the advantages of waiting have been completely exhausted."⁷⁴ He goes on to say there is no exact science that a commander may employ in determining where this point is.⁷⁵ However, envisioning both your own and your enemy's culminating point is a critical element of any plan. As for risk taking, reaching a culminating point might be the single greatest motivator to accept risk.

As mentioned in Section One, there is a distinction

between a calculated risk and an action taken because there is no other option. In the context of when an army reaches its culminating point, the commander should be in the position to still accept risk in conjunction with his action-- though it might be a very high risk. However, once the culminating point has passed, the commander's remaining options have dwindled and possible actions on his part have moved from risk taking to outright gambles.

Analysis of McClellan and Lee

The battlefield conditions of the Peninsula did little to encourage General McClellan to accept risk. In all three elements discussed, he failed -- while Lee succeeded -- to glean any appreciable risk enhancing advantages.

Operational intelligence was a fiasco for McClellan. He depended heavily on the Pinkerton Detective Agency for his intelligence.⁷⁶ They were a constant source of bad intelligence, often doubling the actual number of enemy soldiers facing the Union Army. This bad intelligence network, combined with poor maps and a hostile civilian population, was a critical weakness throughout the campaign. Field Marshal Wolseley summed it up by saying, "(McClellan) never (was) able to estimate accurately his enemy's numbers, (he) lacked intuitive genius for war."⁷⁷

As for the Confederates, their intelligence network was far superior to McClellan's. Though also hampered by

poor maps, Lee used the eyes of his excellent cavalry and those of a friendly civilian population to great advantage. The assistance of Southern sympathizers in the Washington area and uncensored stories in the Northern newspapers only helped to improve Lee's intelligence collection effort.

McClellan's selection of attrition style warfare did nothing to enhance either boldness or risk taking. He selected this conservative style because he perceived it was the best way to take advantage of his strengths. He saw the campaign as a mechanical solution; purely an engineer and artillery operation.⁷⁸ Such a method of warfare has little reliance on risk. To McClellan's credit, General Johnston thought that he had selected a very effective style. Johnston wrote to Lee on 30 April,

We are engaged in a species of warfare at which we can never win. It is plain that General McClellan will...depend for success upon artillery and engineering. We can compete with him in neither.⁷⁹

Unlike Johnston, Lee did not feel the same way. He selected the riskier maneuver style warfare to offset McClellan's advantage in men and material. With the advantages of superior mobility and excellent operational intelligence, Lee was able to derail McClellan's methodical operations.

The final battlefield condition that Lee used to enhance his risk taking at the expense of McClellan was the determination of culmination points. Lee realized

that he had reached his culmination point after the Battle of Seven Pines. If Lee failed to wrest the initiative from McClellan a siege of Richmond would be inevitable. Once begun, Lee would lose his freedom of movement and McClellan's superiority in men and material would assure the siege's success. With that as a catalyst, Lee assumed risk and struck McClellan at Mechanicsville.

McClellan, on the other hand, surrendered the initiative the day following the Battle of Gaine's Mill, because he incorrectly perceived that he had not only reached, but passed, his culminating point. The time for risk taking passed before he even considered it. Though his army certainly had not passed their culminating point, the commander's will was broken. His perception was tainted with many of the adverse influences already discussed. The result was a defeated general withdrawing a superior army from the field of battle.

Conclusion

Previous evidence has shown that McClellan's ability to take risks was hampered by both his personal inadequacies and the external influence of political interference. The battlefield conditions of the Peninsula campaign only served to further weaken his resolve to accept risk, while Lee's risk taking abilities were intensified.

McClellan's sorrowful intelligence system was the

greatest culprit of the battlefield conditions which inhibited his risk taking. The outrageous inflation in Pinkerton's enemy strength figures poisoned all his decisions. Warfare style and culminating points, also tainted by poor intelligence, became secondary matters to a commander that imagined he was facing an army almost twice his size. The battlefield conditions of the Peninsula campaign conspired against McClellan to further inhibit what little risk taking inclination he retained.

SECTION VI. CONCLUSION

Did General McClellan lose simply because he was less of a general than General Lee? Trevor Dupuy indicates the possibility when he wrote of the difference of McClellan and Lee's generalship in a later campaign. He states "If General Lee was a 10.0, then it seems historically reasonable that General McClellan was a 6.0."⁸⁰ Yet doubt is cast on this absolute measurement of Lee's victory when one considers what Lee said of McClellan.

When asked after the war to identify the best Union general he had faced, he (Lee) did not hesitate: "McClellan" he said, "by all odds."⁸¹

The quality of comparative generalship may be in doubt. However, the fact that McClellan's failure to accept risk contributed heavily to his defeat is not in doubt. Through a combination of personal shortcomings, political meddling, and adverse battlefield conditions, McClellan failed his army and his country by refusing to accept

risks. Still, this happened long ago. What value is its study to the current operational commander?

The answer is clear. The choices that both McClellan and Lee faced in the Peninsula campaign are timeless. Risks provide the framework for all military operations. Field Manual 100-5, Operations states that commanders "must accept risks and tenaciously press soldiers and systems,"⁸² and that a commander's audacity is "a feature of successful operations."⁸³ The German Staff College goes even further by stating that one of the principles of operational art is that the commander must be capable of accepting risks.⁸⁴

The U.S. Army's senior leadership manual agrees with the German perspective and recognizes the importance of the personal qualities that permit risk taking. The document states that risk taking is one of the professional capabilities expected in a competent commander, and that the need for taking reasonable risks will be a frequent occurrence.⁸⁵ Certainly a worthy goal, but how can we ensure that our operational commanders are imbued with this quality? How do we avoid a repetition of the Army of the Potomac's performance at the Peninsula campaign?

The easiest way to answer these questions will be by addressing the same categories affecting risk taking as examined in this study: personal traits, political involvement, and battlefield conditions.

Personal Traits

Our Army must strive to advance the leaders that display the traits of moral courage and boldness as well as the more frequently used gauges of technical and administrative competence. These are traits that are often at less a premium to a peacetime army. Nevertheless, the traits are identifiable and should enter our promotion considerations.⁸⁶

Our Army should not rely completely on the hope that the system produces operational commanders that fulfill Clausewitz's description of genius. To offset the personal flaws of the commander he must be provided with an effective staff. Some argue that this was an additional cause of McClellan's failure -- he was poorly served by his staff.⁸⁷ Trevor Dupuy arrived at the same conclusion in his study of the German General Staff. Unable to ensure that all their commanders would become great captains, the Germans created the German General Staff. The result was "that in striving to institutionalize excellence in military affairs, the German General Staff can be said to have institutionalized military genius itself."⁸⁸ The American Army may very well be heading in the same direction with the advent of the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) and the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP).⁸⁹

As we saw in the Peninsula campaign, the commander, influenced by his personal traits, was the final decision

authority for all risks taken or avoided. However, there were also external factors which influenced the commander, and there are lessons to be learned from these also.

Political Involvement

The Peninsula campaign provided a lesson that is pertinent to any democratic nation. The operational commander must keep his strategic commander informed. If the political leadership does not support a military operation, then it is only ventured with great hazard. If the military commander and his political leadership cannot arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution the commander should resign. If the political leader is dissatisfied with his appointed commander, he should replace him rather than second guess him. Such political interference undoubtedly inhibited McClellan's ability to accept risk as did the remaining external factor -- battlefield conditions.

Battlefield Conditions

Though we discussed three battlefield conditions which influence risk taking, two of them, warfare style selected and culminating point, are reliant upon the third, operational intelligence. As seen in the Peninsula campaign, McClellan chose his conservative warfare style and failed to properly ascertain culminating points as a result of faulty operational intelligence.

McClellan's intelligence failure fed his risk taking

inhibitions and serves as a lesson for today's operational commander. Intelligence, though never perfect, must be timely and as accurate as possible. Accuracy comes through redundancy of collection methods and an ability to see through "indicators" in a search for the truth. Had McClellan received a clearer intelligence picture, there is little doubt that the campaign's outcome would have been much different.

McClellan's intelligence was faulty, however, and history recorded the Peninsula campaign as a Union defeat. A defeat made even more stark in view of the tens of thousands of American lives that were ultimately lost over the next three years because an operational commander failed to secure a quick victory by accepting risk. Lee, on the other hand, accepted risk and in doing so prolonged his government's survival. Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, an operational commander that understood the necessity of risk taking, provides a scale for future commanders to consider when assessing risks.

In passing judgement on Hitler, Manstein writes:

...he undoubtedly shrank from the risks which the proposed operation would assuredly entail. Inwardly, perhaps, he did not trust himself to cope with them, for in spite of having a certain eye for tactics, he still lacked the ability of a great captain.⁹⁰

We must demand that our commanders of the future do not shrink from risks as McClellan did, rather they must have the boldness of Lee in their souls if we are to succeed.

END NOTES

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- ²Joseph P. Cullen, The Peninsula Campaign 1862. (Harrisburg: Stackpole Books, 1973), 21.
- ³Clement H. Wright, "The Military Strategy of the Civil War." (New Port, R. I.: Naval War College, 1940), 27.
- ⁴Warren W. Hassler, Commanders of the Army of the Potomac. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), 52.
- ⁵Ibid., 53.
- ⁶Thomas Yoseloff, Campaigns of the Civil War. Volume 2. (New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, Inc., 1963), 23.
- ⁷Harry T. Williams, Lincoln and His Generals. (New York: Vintage Books, 1952), 69.
- ⁸Ibid.
- ⁹Craig L. Symonds, A Battlefield Atlas of the Civil War. (Baltimore: The Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1983), 27.
- ¹⁰Yoseloff, Campaigns of the Civil War, 32.
- ¹¹Ibid., 36-39.
- ¹²Ibid., 36-37.
- ¹³Ibid., 43.
- ¹⁴Ibid., 181. The distortions of strength figures was not limited to Union estimations of the enemy forces. Literally hundreds of pages are written about the inability of Washington to agree with McClellan on how many soldiers that he had in his command. This conflict figures heavily in the debate on how many more soldiers that McClellan really needed to complete his campaign. This study will not provide a conclusion of which party had the accurate personnel count -- though I suspect the truth lies somewhere between both figures. Instead, the very fact that this was a major focus of attention for both the President and his General in the field provides this inquiry with another thread of the influences on risk taking.

- ¹⁵ Symonds, A Battlefield Atlas of the Civil War, 29.
- ¹⁶ Yoseloff, Campaigns of the Civil War, 182, 184.
- ¹⁷ Emory Thomas, Richmond -- The Peninsula Campaign. (Washington, D.C.: Eastern Acorn Press, 1979), 13.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel (eds.), Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. Volume 2. (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, Inc., 1956), 270.
- ²⁰ Edward K. Rawson and Robert H. Woods (eds.), Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion. Series I, Volume 7. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 354, 359.
- ²¹ George B. McClellan, McClellan's Own Story. (New York: Charles L. Webster and Company, 1887), 345.
- ²² Ibid., 347.
- ²³ Thomas, Richmond -- The Peninsula Campaign, 20.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Cullen, The Peninsula Campaign 1862, 54.
- ²⁶ Russell F. Weigley, The American Way of War. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 102.
- ²⁷ Symonds, A Battlefield Atlas of the Civil War, 35.
- ²⁸ Cullen, The Peninsula Campaign 1862, 78.
- ²⁹ On 25 June the first engagement of the Seven Days battle occurred. The Battle of Oak Groves was an inconclusive action resulting from a probe by Union forces.
- ³⁰ Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, 119.
- ³¹ Ibid., 118.
- ³² Thomas, Richmond -- The Peninsula Campaign, 31.
- ³³ Ibid., 36.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 37. The last two sentences in the message were removed by the receiving telegraph operator before the message was delivered to Lincoln.
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- 43 Ibid., 229.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid.
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- 47 Jomini, The Art of War, 55-56.
- 48 Sun Tzu, The Art of War. Edited by Samuel B. Griffith. (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 84.
- 49 J.F.C. Fuller, Generalship -- Its Diseases and Their Cure. (Harrisburg: Military Service Publishing Company, 1936), 97.
- 50 Ibid., 71.
- 51 Clausewitz, On War, 111.
- 52 Dixon, On the Psychology of Military Incompetence, 221. It should be noted that there are other exceptions to Dixon's age assertions: Suvarov, Patton, and MacArthur to name a few.
- 53 Ibid., 167.
- 54 Williams, Lincoln Finds a General, 108.
- 55 Hassler, Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, 28.
- 56 Yoseloff, Campaigns of the Civil War, 178.

- ⁵⁷Page Smith, Trial By Fire, Volume 5. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1982), 279. Also see Yoseloff, Campaigns of the Civil War, 189. Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, 106. In this volume, McClellan relates to his wife the horrors of seeing so many casualties in his first big battle (Seven Pines).
- ⁵⁸Sun Tzu, The Art of War, 81.
- ⁵⁹Lincoln soon recognized that he was unable to properly manage all the tasks entailed in such a job. As a result, he later gave the job to General Halleck.
- ⁶⁰B.H. Liddell Hart, Strategy, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967): 145.
- ⁶¹Field Marshal Viscount Wolseley, The American Civil War -- An English View, (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1964), 111.
- ⁶²McClellan, McClellan's Own Story, 277.
- ⁶³Though beyond the scope of this study, it is interesting to note that General Johnston demonstrated no desire to assume risk throughout his participation in the campaign. One might suspect that the inhibiting influence of political interference, among other factors, may have claimed Johnston as it did McClellan.
- ⁶⁴Symonds, A Battlefield Atlas of the Civil War, 24.
- ⁶⁵Douglas S. Freeman, Lee's Confidential Dispatches to Davis 1862-65, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1915).
- ⁶⁶Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, 81.
- ⁶⁷Ibid., 60.
- ⁶⁸Townsend E. Carter, Risks: The Key to combat Intelligence, (Harrisburg: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1953), 6.
- ⁶⁹Ibid., 34-35.
- ⁷⁰Edward N. Luttwak, Strategy -- The Logic of War and Peace, (London: Belknap Press, 1987), 92-93.
- ⁷¹Ibid., 92-94.
- ⁷²Ibid., 94.
- ⁷³Ibid.

- 74 Clausewitz, On War, 383.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Hassler, Commanders of the Potomac, 32, 49.
- 77 Wolseley, The American Civil War -- An English View, xxxii.
- 78 Thomas, Richmond -- The Peninsula Campaign, 25.
- 79 Warren W. Hassler, General George B. McClellan - Shield of the Union, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974), 94.
- 80 Trevor N. Dupuy, Understanding War - History and Theory of Combat, (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1987), 267.
- 81 Symonds, A Battlefield Atlas of the Civil War, 25.
- 82 Field Manual 100-5, Operations, (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1987), 24.
- 83 Ibid., 98.
- 84 Briefing given to the School of Advanced Military Studies by LTC. Olt Hoegger, German Staff College, 22 Feb 88.
- 85 Field Manual 22-103, Leadership and Command at Senior Levels, (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1987), 33.
- 86 Kenneth R. MacCrimmon and Donald A. Wehrung, Taking Risks - The Management of Uncertainty, (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 277.
- 87 Yoseloff, Campaigns of the Civil War, 182-183.
- 88 Trevor N. Dupuy, A Genius For War - The German Army and General Staff 1807-1945, (Englewood Cliff, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977), 299.
- 89 SAMS provides a year of training for selected Majors and Lieutenant Colonels in the art of operational war. The BCTP is a computer driven exercise designed to train corps and division commanders and their staffs. The multi-faceted program contains an objective of producing "bold, aggressive, and innovative risk taking commanders and staffs." Based on a briefing provided to the School of Advanced Military Studies by Major Radford on 11 March 1988.
- 90 Erich von Manstein, Lost Victories, edited and translated by Anthony G. Powell, (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982), 446.

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